



# Avondale worried route will bisect city

## ADOT mulls 3 corridors for freeway

**Dennis Godfrey**

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A freeway that is more than 10 years from being built has the attention of Southwest Valley cities.

Avondale, in particular, has concerns about where Arizona 801, known as the Interstate 10 reliever, will be built.

The Arizona Department of Transportation is in the process of selecting the freeway corridor.

Goodyear, Avondale and Phoenix are directly affected. Buckeye will be affected by a more westerly leg of the 801.

ADOT is considering one of three corridors through Goodyear, Avondale and Phoenix:

- South of Broadway Road.
- About a quarter-mile north of Southern Avenue.
- About a quarter-mile north of the Gila River.

Avondale strongly favors the third choice.

"Our concern is that if you select one of the more northern alignments it will have the effect of bisecting the city," said David Fitzhugh, Avondale's assistant city manager.

Developers already have plans for housing in those areas, he said.

"Our interest is to minimize the impact of those communities that are being planned at this point," Fitzhugh said.

Avondale has won the support of Goodyear and Phoenix.

The Goodyear City Council this week adopted a resolution recommending the southernmost route.

A Phoenix staff report recommends supporting Avondale's preference between 107th and 91st avenues. The

report proposes that the freeway take a more northerly route from 91st to 59th avenues.

Diane D'Angelo, a spokeswoman for ADOT, said a public meeting on the proposed corridor will be scheduled in early summer.

A selection report, with recommendations, is to be ready in the fall, D'Angelo said.

The process can be time-consuming, she said.

"The plus part of doing all this if we do it on the front end then by the time the freeway comes about all these issues have been worked out," she said. "It's not about one player imposing that entity's will on everybody else."

Construction of the six-lane freeway is on ADOT's schedule for 2021-26.

It is designed to connect the planned Loop 303 with the planned West Valley extension of Loop 202.

The 801 reliever would be built to lessen traffic on I-10. It would allow vehicles to bypass downtown Phoenix and connect to the southern end of Loop 202 and thus to I-10 toward Tucson.

Construction is years away, but now is the time to prepare, Avondale's Fitzhugh said.

"Our city is growing. We're trying to ensure a well-developed city (striking) a balance between different uses," he said.

**Reach the reporter at (602) 444-6513.**

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